

*unclassified*

February 22, 1974 (7:00 p

SECRETARY'S REMARKS ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE COMMUNITY

The remarks of the preceding speakers reflect the seriousness with which they take the task to which we have set ourselves. The consensus that seems to have emerged out of these remarks is that all agree as I do that this dialogue has been extremely useful and could, if we follow it up in the spirit in which it has been conducted, mark a new era in our relationship. It has also become clear to me that there is considerable concern about a word I introduced into my speech of a Western Hemisphere Community. As I will indicate in a few minutes, we should not spend an excessive amount of time on the word "community" but since it reflected a serious intention and since serious questions have been asked with respect to it, let me explain what we had in mind.

The distinguished Foreign Minister of Venezuela asked if it is a new concept reflecting a new reality or whether it expresses a former reality in new terms or exactly how we should define it, all of which implies that we are seeking a juridical expression for our relationship that can be then expressed in legal obligations which we in turn or others may use as a basis of claims. This was not our intention.

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For as long as I have been connected with government, my friends from Latin America have complained about the neglect of them by the United States and for as long as I have been in government my friends from Latin America have told me that the United States had some special obligations towards Latin America. It is also a fact that we are united in the Organization of American States. It is obviously a fact that we are here. Why is this group of Foreign Ministers together? What term shall be given to reality of institutional links that have grown up over the decades of sad historical experiences and of common concerns is not a matter of profound importance to me.

What is of importance for all of us in this room is to be clear in our minds whether we do have a special relationship, whatever noun we give it or whether we do not have such a relationship. We cannot both claim special concerns and no special relationship. That will be impossible to sustain over a long period of time.

I must say many very profound things have been said and I was very much impressed and moved by the comments of the Foreign Minister of Guyana, and I am proud to note that the distinguished Foreign Minister of Brazil has assigned him to our sphere, and I gladly claim him. I must say I would

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rather have him on my side than against me.

Now let me make a few philosophic observations, not related to the word "community" but to the reality of our presence here. It was said that the quest for unity sometimes hides the aspiration for hegemony and that community can easily lead to dominion. That is true, and there are historical precedents for this, but if it is true that we live in a world of interdependence I think one should not state the opposition in absolute terms. On some issues community exists through the facts of life, and on some issues independence exists as a fact of life. The problem really of practical foreign policy is how to reconcile these two concerns; but I want to make a more fundamental point. The fundamental point I want to make has to do with the question of whether it is really true as Aristotle said that between unequals there can be no reciprocal relationship. I think we must first of all distinguish reciprocity and equivalence, and we must define more precisely what we mean by equality. When we talk of reciprocity in the United States delegation, we do not mean that we must get an equivalent quid pro quo for everything we do. It does mean that we believe a healthy relationship requires some commitment on the other party. I think it is the only basis for a dignified relationship. Clearly, serious reciprocity, paradoxically,

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in relations between developed and less developed countries must involve a differential in favor of the less developed countries, but it cannot involve an absence from any responsibility by the less developed countries.

Let me turn to the question of equality. We live in a very novel historical period. Throughout history economic, military and political power were roughly commensurable to each other. It almost never happened that a nation was economically strong and militarily weak. It never happened that a nation was politically strong and militarily impotent. Today the various categories of power have become incommensurable with each other. You can have nations that are economic giants, like Japan, that are military pigmies. You can have nations that are military giants that cannot give political effect to their decisions. It would have been unthinkable in traditional diplomacy, speaking here to friends, that nations of a few million, like some of the oil producing countries, could change the style of life of nations of hundreds of millions by a unilateral decision. It could not have happened at any other period of history. It is happening now.

Now, therefore, when one speaks of equality one must not simply measure military power; one has to look also at economic power, moral power and political power. Another aspect of foreign policy at this moment is the decisive role

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for many societies of public opinion. I think it is fair to say that a policy that cannot be endorsed by the public over a period of time can have no long range reality, no matter how much power there is behind it.

Frankly, I have the impression that the word "community" creates domestic problems for many in this room in the sense that if they sign a document that has the word "community" in it, they must then answer all the questions that the distinguished Foreign Minister of Venezuela has raised and others have raised around this table. Therefore, it is fair that they should ask us what we mean by it. But what we mean by it is not a legal concept nor is it a concept that we can use for hegemony or dominion. This concern about hegemony is not new to us. We have encountered it in our discussions with our European friends, who in physical terms are much stronger than some of the nations assembled here. I have always pointed out, as I will point out to you, that in the present period one does not achieve hegemony by signing a document. Supposing we all sign a document here with the word "community" and next year some of you go off to a conference in Algiers and sign the declarations that are foreseeable. Will the United States be able to waive the declaration of Mexico at you and say you have done something illegal? The reality is that either we can create a spirit of community

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or we can't. If we can we don't need the document and if we can't the document won't help us.

Hegemony in this period is not achieved by treaties or by documents so, on the other hand, we have to give some moral content to what we have done here. We have to answer the question, why are we here? The great danger of hegemony in the world right now, if I may say so, is not documents we ask anyone to sign -- the great danger of hegemony is that the methods that have been used in the international monetary field will be used in the foreign policy field. To put it crudely, if every nation floats its own foreign policy and works without restraints or treaties and obligations, and insists that its specific weight must carry the day, then you have the real danger of hegemony. The great temptation for the super powers at this moment, in my judgment, is not whether they can get a few more declarations signed -- the great temptation is to operate unilaterally -- so I am here not in order to achieve a commitment by my colleagues to support American foreign policy. Such a commitment would be unenforceable and operationally not useful. My purpose is to see whether this hemisphere with its tradition of countries working together can contribute to a structure of restraint in the world achieved in some norm of consultation. When I put the

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international item on the agenda, and the energy item, it was not to get the support of this group for our position, it was to symbolize to this group that we were serious about consultations and that we were prepared to share our super-power knowledge without particular commitment from our colleagues here. We have to find some solution to this question. We have brought here a senior delegation from our Congress as a token of our determination to give concrete effect to what we agreed -- but the reality for us is that, when you list the items that we have discussed, transnational corporations, investment disputes, Panama Canal, scientific exchange -- none of them has a great symbolic meaning in the United States, as all of your Ambassadors accredited in Washington will tell you. We don't want simply to sign a declaration which six months later, no one can possibly remember. We should do it in a way or in the name of something that gives continuity to it. That was the intention behind using the word "community".

It is the wish of the American delegation that we end this conference in the spirit that we are beginning a process and that what we agreed to, will really happen. So this was the reasoning behind the word "community".

Having said this I must also realize that this is not something that we can promote in a document. It either exists

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or it doesn't exist. Therefore, in the spirit in which we have been meeting here I withdraw the word "community" and I will instruct my representative on the drafting committee to remove it.

On the other hand, I think we have an obligation to give some moral content to our meeting here and to end it with something other than a fact finding body for investment disputes. That new dialogue must have been about something, and the reason that we feel, as I sense, that something new has been started here, has to be more than the transfer of technology. What that word is, what the direction is, I am open minded about and I would therefore suggest that some of my colleagues use their ingenuity to come up with some phraseology that is appropriate to the occasion. I think somewhere in the document we ought to mention that we talked in a spirit of community, but not as an existing political institutional term. My major concern is not to justify a drafting exercise -- I have been at enough international conferences to know that the last night one spends all one's energy producing a document, the content of which three months afterwards one doesn't remember. The most important thing we have to do here is to see whether we can create a living reality and that has to be more than the technical issues we



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discussed -- but what it is precisely I leave to my colleagues to discuss in consultation with us in the time that remains.

(Transcribed from tape)

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